

# DIME NOVEL ROUNDUP



A magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the 1850s to 1950s, including: old-time dime and nickel novels, series books, pulps and popular story papers.

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## SAM S. HALL'S PORTRAYAL OF JUAN CORTINA IN DIME NOVELS

By James L. Evans



## DIME NOVEL SKETCHES #266

### THE LAUREL LIBRARY

Publisher: George Munro, 17 to 27 Vandewater St., New York. Issues: 227 (Highest number seen advertised). Dates: 1891-1903. Schedule: Quarterly (May have been monthly during part of its run). Size: 7 1/8 x 4 5/8". Pages: 200 to 300. Price: 25¢. Illustrations: Early editions as above, later with black and white pictorial cover. Contents: Mainly reprints from *Fireside Companion*.

## EDITORIAL

After 42 years of editing and publishing the *Dime Novel Roundup*, I'm turning over the reins to someone younger and more capable. J. Randolph Cox has been a contributor of many fine articles published in the *Roundup*. His knowledge of dime novels and related popular publications is unsurpassed. The *Roundup* will be in good hands.

After much deliberation and soul searching, I have decided to increase the subscription price to \$15.00 per year. This will be effective June 1, 1994. With increased costs, it has been a losing proposition for the last few years. This was decided before the decision was made to pass on the *Roundup* to Randy. I hope you will give him a chance to show his expertise and continue your subscriptions.

The new address for *Roundup* after July 1, 1994, will be:

*Dime Novel Roundup*

Box 226

Dundas, MN 55019

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#### SAM S. HALL'S PORTRAYAL OF JUAN CORTINA IN DIME NOVELS

By James L. Evans

From 1859 till the end of the century, Juan Cortina was known throughout the nation as "the Scourge of the Rio Grande" and the worst Mexican bandit in American history. Supposedly he led masses of lesser Mexican bandits who shot Americans, stole cattle, and destroyed property along the Texas side of the Rio Grande for nearly two hundred miles.

The role of Cortina was largely an outgrowth of the cultural and economic situation of the time and place. U.S. communities along the river were bordered on the north by more than a hundred miles of arid desert, and on the south by the Rio Grande River and Mexico. Settlements on both sides of the river were inhabited mostly by persons of Mexican descent. U.S. military forts presumably kept peace along the Mexican border in the 1850s, and the one at Brownsville, Texas, certainly contributed to the local economy of the Anglo-American businesses until it was deactivated in 1859. Later that same year Juan Cortina, who was Mexican-born but lived alternately on the Mexican and U.S. side, led a raid in Brownsville, obviously seeking revenge on a few specific personal enemies. But a few Anglo-American residents who had recently immigrated to the area from the North claimed that he was a Mexican bandit invading the U.S. They complained to officials in Austin and Washington and to newspapers all over the country saying that this Mexican bandit led the raid and controlled hundreds of lesser bandits. Their complaints were probably due largely to the desire to boost the local economy by securing the re-establishment of Fort Brown and to their own feelings of racial superiority over darker-colored Mexicans.

With racial tension rising, many Mexicans on both sides of the river began to regard Cortina as a hero who would rescue them from the powerful Americans. Seeing that open warfare existed between the Mexicans and the few Anglos in the area, Cortina accepted the role of bandit leader erro-

neously assigned to him by both Mexicans and Anglos, and he became a bandit leader.

During the Civil War, Cortina ordinarily worked with the Union forces, and he and his followers had a heyday of crime and cattle theft against the Texans, who then hated him even more for his work against the Confederacy.

Reports of him continued to be published throughout the country. Though most reports of activities were fictitious or were greatly exaggerated and though most of the thefts were by starving Mexicans in no way associated with Cortina, certainly he was notorious during the next decades.

Most individuals who have been regarded as great heroes or terrible villains for such a long period of time have become the basis for numerous literary works. Strangely though, no major work—novel, poem, drama, or other form (except government documents)—has dealt primarily with Juan Cortina as man, as bandit, or as myth. A few dime novelists of the later 1800s did use him in their stories, however.

Certainly the dime novelist who used Cortina most extensively was Sam S. Hall (also known as "Buckskin Sam"); he used Cortina in about a dozen dime novels published by the Beadle Company during the last nine years of his short life.

This article will deal with Sam Hall's treatment of Cortina as a character and as a subject. Unlike many dime novelists who had no first-hand knowledge of the locale of their stories, Hall had lived in South Texas for more than a decade of his early adulthood, serving most of that time as a scout, a Texas Ranger, or a soldier. He had often served in units fighting Cortina's men. After he began writing dime novels back East in the late 1870s, Hall often used his personal experiences and observations; thus, his works are more realistic and more factually accurate than those of most dime novelists.

The typical reader of the time regarded Mexico as an inferior place inhabited by sneaky bandits and inert peons, and he regarded all Texans as good guys. Hall, however, was not racially prejudiced, and he knew the politics and ways of military life. Consequently, he often shows that many Mexicans are innocent of deeds blamed on them, and he often attributes evil events to the corruption and inefficiency of Americans, both military and civilian. The sense of reality in his stories makes his ideas more convincing to the reader. As a dime novelist, however, Hall was required to make the story exciting and was required to give the readers some of what they wanted. Therefore, he treated Cortina as a terrible villain, but he also gave attention to Cortina's fictitious assistants who were all epitomes of evil—and were sometimes even Americans.

The way that Hall most alters both the truth and the myth of Cortina is in the location of Cortina himself. Hall had lived several years in Live Oak County (150 miles from the Rio Grande) and in San Antonio. Though Cortina was in the border area most of the time from 1859 until after 1875, neither rumors of the time nor the voluminous government documents about him indicate that he was ever very far north of the border communities. But Hall uses places he personally knew; also, by having Cortina far in the interior of Texas, Hall intensifies the fear and anxiety Cortina caused to characters of the story and to Hall's readers.

Shall we look at a few specific stories? The first of these, Hall's first story and the one that is probably the most autobiographically accurate, is *Dime Library #3—KIT CARSON, JR., THE CRACK SHOT OF THE WEST*. It begins in Oakville in Live Oak County in 1860, and several characters and the action move towards Brownsville and the Mexican border. As in

later stories, Hall gives much historical information about the Cortina of the myth, and tells of Cortina's control over the Mexican peons and his making war on both sides of the Rio Grande. In the first half of the first page, a character establishes the mood of fear by saying that Cortina surely had a formidable force "to invade a State, and burn and pillage the ranches for a hundred miles." (p. 2 c. 2) The reader learns immediately that the story will be a struggle between two forces—Cortina and the Texans. Many dime novels of the West are simply accounts of one Indian raid after another until the author has used up his quota of words; likewise, this story by Hall is largely an account of one skirmish after another with details of such things as the lashing of horses, the climbing of steep treacherous banks of the river, and the escaping in dense chaparral. These realistic details are things Hall had learned from experience. Rumors of the time tell that Cortina was unusually safely hidden at headquarters plotting maneuvers, but in *DL* #3, he is actually in the field fighting at all times. Near the end of this interesting but plotless story the series of skirmishes ends with a victory for the Texans. In expository material, Hall again tells that Cortina had led "the strongest, boldest, and most murderous band of cutthroats ever congregated together upon the American continent," and for months they had been "committing the most horrible murders...burning ranches, stealing horses and cattle by thousands, and leaving a smoking trail of desolation and ruin up and down the Rio Grande." (p. 21, c. 3) Later, one American character comments that "Cortina is far from being whipped...In less than a month...Cortina will again disgrace the soil of Texas by his presence. He is here, there, and everywhere." (p. 24, c. 2) His being everywhere creates tension for the reader, just as the myths said it did for the Texans of the period. The story concludes in San Antonio with an account of a wedding, but we are told that the newly-married man "had not long to linger by her side" because the Texans were again "soon on their way to the Rio Grande, Cortina having again invaded the state." (p. 27, c. 2)

This story begins and ends in Central Texas but takes place mostly along the Rio Grande, where the Texans fight Cortina and his forces. In this story, as in real life, Cortina and his men travel far up the Rio Grande, but not far into the interior of the U.S. Most of the minor characters in this story were historical persons who were actually scouts in Texas at the time. Perhaps because this novel was Hall's first story, he stuck closely to the actual facts.

In DESPERATE DUKE, THE GUADALOUE "GALOOT" (*Dime Library* #221), the story begins and ends in the San Antonio area, and much of it takes place there; other parts occur along the Rio Grande. In some ways this story is more confusing than the other, but it has a more involved plot; Hall was by then a more experienced writer. The story centers primarily around Duke Dudley, a wealthy American rancher and scoundrel. In Chapter IX, some 25,000 words into the story, Duke flees into "a score and a half of villainous-looking Mexicans or half-breeds, all armed with *escopetas* [rifles] and long knives." (p. 9, c. 1) In the midst of these men is Cortina—there in the San Antonio area. We meet him for the first time and learn that Duke is his spy. From then on, Cortina and his bandits are everpresent in the story. Of course, the good guys are now in danger of both Duke Dudley and Cortina. In this and other dime novels, as in the usual legend, Cortina, always "escaped miraculously without a scratch." (p. 9, c. 3)

But in this story the Texans seldom ever have an encounter with Cortina. He and his followers are always nearby; they are always a force that creates anxiety for both the other characters and the reader. Though

Cortina's presence naturally creates fear, his actual activity in this story is usually with the fictitious scoundrel named Duke Dudley. Duke and Cortina head towards the Rio Grande with the Texans in pursuit, Comanches appear, and bandits and Comanches both chase the Texans. Near the Rio Grande, Cortina and Duke have conflicts with each other and come to a parting of the ways, and the good Texans cut off Duke's ears. Hated by everyone and fleeing for his life, Duke leaves Texas. In the last chapter we learn the whereabouts of each major character; Cortina is again north of the Rio Grande, and soldiers return to the scene because again Cortina "had swept the American side of the river,...burning ranches, and driving thousands of horses and cattle across the river into Mexico, besides shooting many of the rancheros on this trail of rapine, murder, and revenge." (p. 23, c. 3) In this story, Cortina is not mentioned until a third of the way through, but he is continually present from then on, whether the scenes are near San Antonio or near the Mexican border. Cortina does not often fight the Texans, however; he is too much involved in his encounters with Desperate Duke.

THE ROUGH RIDERS; OR, SHARP EYE, THE SEMINOLE SCOURGE (*Dime Library* #250) deals largely with a Seminole Indian's struggles for revenge against Cortina. After the U.S. had succeeded in removing some of the Seminoles from Florida to the Indian Territory in the 1840s, a chief named Wildcat led some renegades of that group into Southern Texas.<sup>1</sup> Because of conflicts with the Comanches there, he went on into Mexico and established a small colony of Seminole refugees immediately south of the Rio Grande River. When the Civil War begins, the character Sharp Eye is a leader of the Seminoles in Mexico.

Hall mentions in the first column of *Dime Library* #250 that the followers of Cortina were never "So daring, bold, and successful as in the first year of the Civil War," when all fighting men of Texas were at the front and there was no one to protect their homes. (p. 2, c. 2) Though the Texans had never admired Wildcat's followers and have only a neutral attitude toward Sharp Eye, the American reader is on the side of Sharp Eye, who hates Cortina.

Before the story begins, Sharp Eye's lover (who was also the daughter of Wildcat) had committed suicide after being violated by a Mexican bandit. At the time Sharp Eye first appears in the story, he is convinced that Cortina was the guilty one, and he is obsessed with the idea of seeking vengeance on Cortina.

In time, Sharp Eye learns that his lover had not been violated by Cortina, but by one of his lieutenants, a man named Peres. This man was more innately evil than Cortina but was of less danger to Texans because of his lack of skills. Eventually Peres doublecrosses Cortina and becomes his enemy. Then Peres and Cortina each commands a group of bandits attacking the other, and of course both lead attacks on Sharp Eye.

Finally Sharp Eye captures Peres. After the Seminole women torture Peres, primarily with the use of mesquite thorns, Peres is tied astride a horse that is driven off a steep cliff. The fall kills him.

The involved plot is mostly about Sharp Eye's seeking revenge, but all these events take place against a backdrop of Cortina and his innumerable bandits, who are continually present and are continually creating problems for Americans all along the Rio Grande. The reader will not remember the details of the involved intrigue among Cortina and Peres and Sharp Eye, but he will certainly remember the continual anxiety caused by rumors that Cortina (and his evil followers) will invade Brownsville, the largest town on the American side of the Rio Grande. There are, however, no individualized Texans involved in conflict or danger with Cortina. As

usual, Cortina is referred to as a skilled organizer and is described with such phrases as "the most daring and bloodthirsty bandit America has ever known." In both the exposition and the narrative, Hall praises the Texas Rangers and condemns the U.S. government, and the protagonist and hero are both the Seminole Indian. As in other stories, Hall frequently reveals his lack of racial prejudice. Though he refers to those "villainous Mexican bandits," he also states in expository material that the Indians and Mexicans were not the only guilty ones, for "every Mexican on the Texas side of the Rio Grande was looked upon with suspicion and hatred by the [Texas] rangers; and many who were doubtless innocent of the crimes imputed to them, or in any way connected with Cortina, were hanged like dogs, or shot in their tracks, to avenge some terrible crime that has been committed in their neighborhood." (p. 29, c. 2)

Often in this story, Hall weaves historical and geographical information into the expository material, and he gives vivid details showing his knowledge of life in the chaparrals, of scouts in the field, and of South Texas in general. And as usual, the story concludes with the mention that the defeat of Cortina in a major battle did not discourage him, "for in less than thirty days the outlaw chief again invaded Texas with twice as many followers." (p. 29, c. 1) Thus, Hall ends with the idea that Cortina is a continual threat in South Texas.

In other stories, Hall places some events in Live Oak County and/or the San Antonio area—and of course many along the Rio Grande. For example, in *THE MERCILESS MARAUDERS*, the scenes almost alternate between Live Oak County (where the Dean family are victims of Mexican bandits because of Cortina's grudge against the elder Dean) and Rio Grande City, located on the Rio Grande River. In spite of all the problems Cortina caused in South Texas, probably neither he nor the bandits under his authority were ever more than twenty miles north of the Mexican border. But, Hall in many of his stories intensifies the action and tension by showing Cortina not just as a Mexican bandit along the Mexican border but as a Mexican bandit far into the interior of Texas.

Since Hall had personally been a scout and a Texas Ranger in numerous Cortina raids, he logically thought of those situations when writing dime novels years later. And quite logically he showed Cortina as a powerful, havoc-creating bandit leader who rightfully deserved his well known title of "The Scourge of the Rio Grande." Though writers of fiction and poetry have never used Cortina as a major figure, we can see why and how Sam S. Hall used both the legendary Cortina and his own fictitious Cortina in fictitious accounts of realistic life in his dime novels about South Texas.

#### NOTE

1 Wildcat (Coacoochee) was an historical figure who played prominently in the Seminole fight for resistance against whites in Florida, in the Indian Territory, and in Texas. After leading the Seminoles in Florida, he was forced westward. Thoroughly embittered by life in the Indian Territory, he went into Southern Texas with intentions of uniting with the Comanches to fight the Texans. His first dealings with the Comanches led to hostility, however, and eventually his small band of Seminoles went into Mexico. The Mexican government granted them land; and in return for his assistance in fighting Apaches and Comanches in the area, he was made a colonel in the Mexican army. Some members of the Kickapoo tribe joined them there. Wildcat died of smallpox in 1857.

Wildcat was deceased for about four years before this dime novel begins, but he is mentioned in it many times. In my research, I have been unable to find any reference to Sharp Eye (who was probably a fictitious

character) or to Wildcat's having a daughter who committed suicide. Though the band of Seminoles was in Mexico at the time of Cortina's activity, probably they had no contact with him. On the U.S. side, Cortina's activity did not extend west of Rio Grande City; in Mexico, Cortina's activity extended southward into the interior, not westward. The Seminole settlement was on the Mexican side near Eagle Pass, which is more than two hundred miles west of Rio Grande City. As I have pointed out, Hall was familiar with Texas geography but placed Cortina and his followers wherever he chose. In addition to the Seminoles in the Florida Everglades and the ones in Central Oklahoma, a few descendants of Wildcat's band still live in Northern Mexico, as do some descendants of the Kickapoos who joined them there.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

This article is based on extensive reading of government documents, contemporary newspaper articles, and other material about Juan Cortina. It is also based on numerous Beadle dime novels by Sam S. Hall. The Beadle dime novels primarily used in the article are the following ones:

- Dime Library* #3—KIT CARSON, JR., THE CRACK SHOT OF THE WEST, 1877.  
*Dime Library* #221—DESPERATE DUKE, THE GUADALOUPE "GALOOT;" OR, THE ANGEL OF THE ALAMO CITY, 1883.  
*Dime Library* #250—THE ROUGH RIDERS; OR, SHARP EYE, THE SEMINOLE SCOURAGE, 1883.

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#### DIME NOVELS AT THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Two papers related to the dime novel world will be presented at the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading, and Publishing (SHARP) at the organization's annual meeting, July 14-16, 1994, at the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress, Washington, DC. Professor Trudi Johanna Abel, Department of History, Williams College, will speak on "The End of a Genre: Postal Regulations and the Dime Novel's Demise," and Lydia Schurman will present "R. G. Dun and Company Credit Reports on the American News Company, 1864-1892." The American News Company was the giant distribution company which delivered dime novels, story papers, newspapers, and other periodicals across the country.

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EARLY WESTERN LIFE SERIES—No. 16  
The Silent Rifleman, by Montana Charley  
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## PULP MAGAZINE LIASON BETWEEN READER AND PUBLISHER

By Rocco Joame Musemeche

It was at a time when coins jostled rather than jingled in the pockets of would-be purchasers of pulp publications across America. After speculating on which to take home and sizing up author, hero and story contents, the buyer regardless of said author, hero or table of contents inevitably flipped to the pages at the rear of the magazine, pages made interesting and familiar through departments in which the reader was encouraged to participate.

These never forgotten sections categorized everything dear to the heart of the reader, giving them the opportunity to praise, criticize, suggest as well as urging the publisher and or author in more of the same palatable word feast. This opportunity could also mean clarification from the author on certain segments of a story read but not understood.

At times the publisher was caught between a rock and a hard place but one sensed however, it was an opportunity to gauge the likes and dislikes of readers which after all provided a balance, good relationship and yes, better reads.

What were these departments like? Let's turn to the 20s and 30s for a look-see.



*Argosy Magazine* used this alert to point out what readers could expect in next week's issue. This attention getter did much in whetting the reading appetite and certainly gave the public something to anticipate. So save up a dime for next week you readers.

By 1928 the Looking Ahead call to arms took on a new and better image. Here the reader (and prospective buyer) is permitted a sample of what was in store and to judge from story and author, this one was a treat.

The Men Who Make The Argosy was the publisher's answer to requests on what the author, illustrator or whatever projected from birth. You were given a run-down straight from the source. It was the scratch that satisfied the reader's itch. An at random spotlight totally pleasing to reader and author alike.

Ah, here it is, the number one liaison between reader and publisher, *Argosy Magazine's* Argonotes, where confidences were copiously bestowed. Most readers of this popular publication were positive in the belief the good ship Argosy as pictured, was burdened with reading goodies and on the way to the port nearest a favorite armchair or reading nook. Avast, you expectant readers, make for blissful page turning.

The Reader's Viewpoint preceded the more presentable Argonotes but was an interesting make-up with just as much appeal. This particular one assures Worts and MacIsaac fans that stories are forthcoming from these two very popular authors. The Worts sequel to the mentioned "Down With Women" tale appeared a few weeks later as "Freedom Of The She's," while the material MacIsaac gathered while in the South of France in 1927, resulted in his two novels, THE PANCAKE PRINCESS and THE COAST OF BLUE.



# Looking Ahead!

*Pirate blood! Old Malabar Mack, the Silver Fang, had been the terror of the China coast. Malabar Mackenzie, his grandson, was nothing but a social dilettante. What a transition for wild, unruly pirate blood! But, after all, how much does blood change? How completely can Civilization submerge the primal call to combat? How thoroughly can it emasculate the blood that once strode, flashing cutlass in hand, along a slippery, rolling deck?*

GEORGE F. WORTS

answers these questions with a tense and fascinating novel

## THE SILVER FANG

*Begin it in the ISSUE OF DECEMBER 15th*

## The Men Who Make The Argosy



### Argonotes

The Readers' Viewpoint



### THE READER'S VIEWPOINT

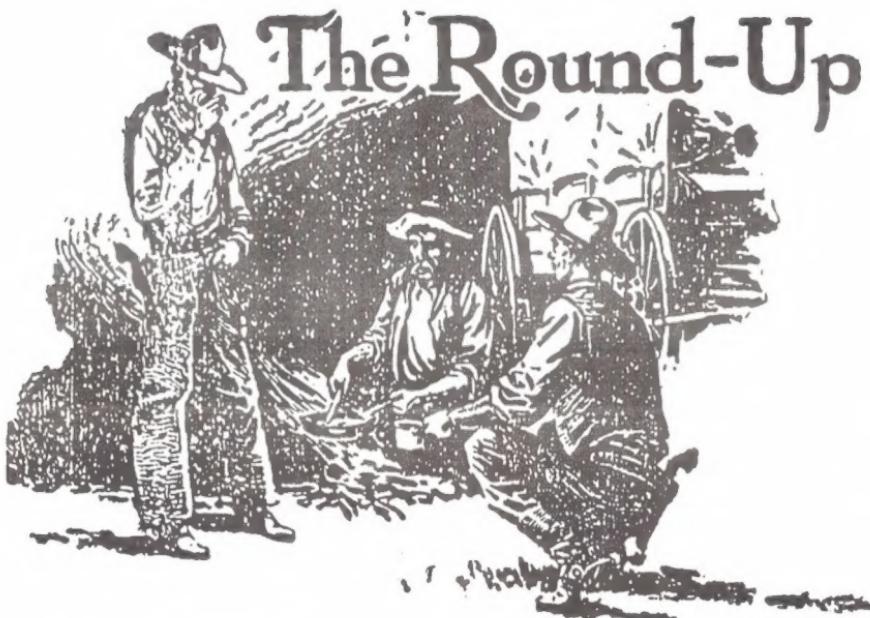
**S**O much discussion has been aroused by "Down With Women," the complete novella of January 29, that the author, Mr. Worts, is now writing a companion story. Oddly enough, those who take issue with him are not the women, but the men, or those speaking on behalf of men. By the way, in connection with the letter from Mrs. R. E. P., Fred MacIsaac has been to Peru and is about to embark for Italy and the Riviera, where he will gather material for the further entertainment of our readers. In answer to a recent inquiry, we have a political story on hand, to be used probably near Election Day.



# The Log-Book

By the O Editor

Back in 1919 when the good ship was named *Argosy-AllStory*, the fore-runner of Looking Ahead was given the appropriate title of The Log Book, a section which carried the goings and comings of each week.

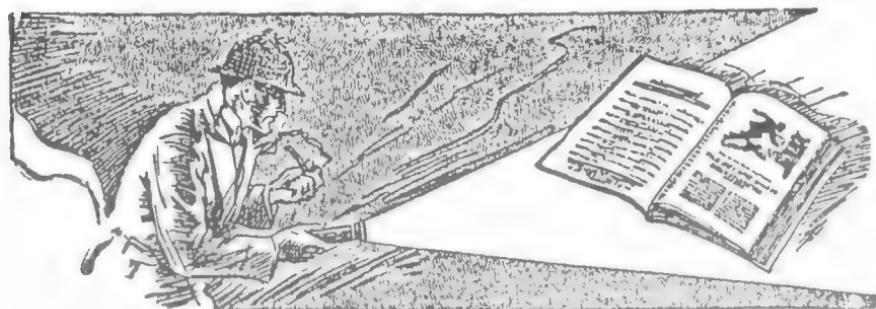
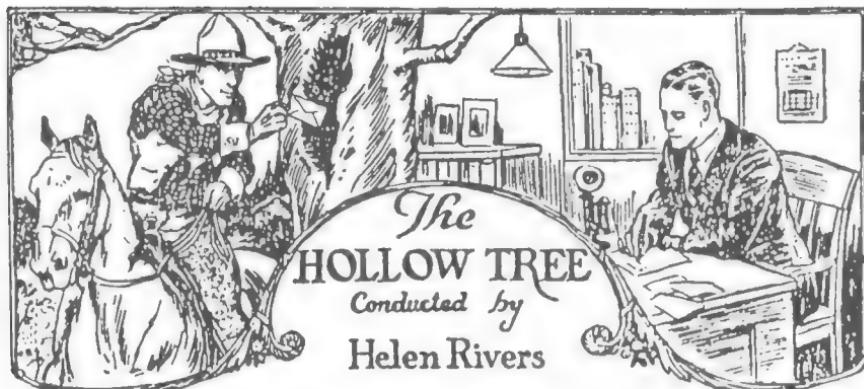


*Western Story Magazine* relied on the heavy western atmosphere as depicted at the head of its The Round-Up department and a well read section it was, especially helped by the western projection. One could almost taste the contents simmering in the pan and a strong whiff from the coffee held in the hand of the cowpoke squatting on the right.

The other *Western Story* favorite was The Hollow Tree, conducted by Helen Rivers who made it possible for boys and girls to correspond with each other after initially writing to her so that mail could be directed to the proper exchange address.

OK, but what is the gentleman with the phone supposed to be doing?

*Detective Fiction Weekly* let everyone know what its Flashes From Readers was about when once they spied Sherlock shining his torch and the caption was read.



## Flashes From Readers

*Where Readers and Editors Get Together to Gossip  
and Argue, and Everyone Speaks Up His Mind*

And its sometimes companion department, The Puzzle Chest was just that, solutions asked for according to Helen Asbury, the prize awarmer.

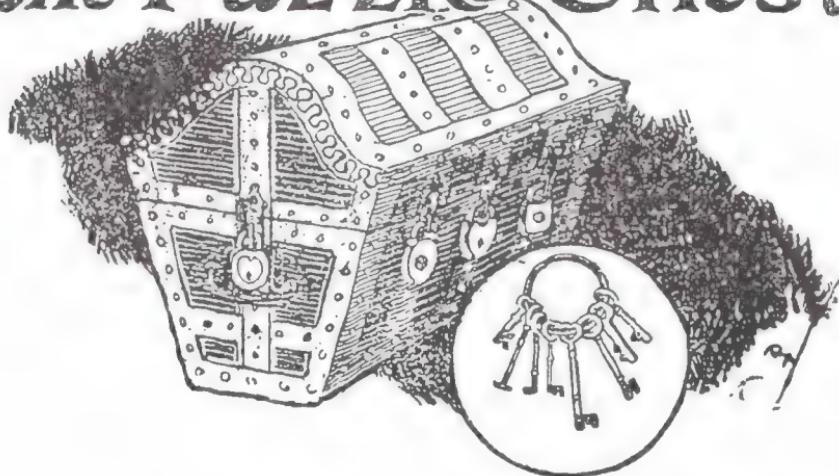
*Clues Magazine*, that noble outlet of Barron Ixell stories, by Oscar Schisgall, and a bevy of favorite mystery stories from Madeline Sharps Buchanan, sported a classy section on Following Clues.

*Action Story Magazine* may have lived up to its boast as the "Log Book of Adventurers" and if so it was credited to its World Adventurers Club of which True Adventures and Trail Tips were a part.

The boast of *Action Story* was not an idle one for its Adventurers Club was really a group of worldwide adventurers. You had to have the proper credentials to belong. They were men from every land, clime and culture and their letters to this department was like a journey taken to the exotic places one only dreams of ever visiting. Memberships were bestowed buttons to prove they were bona fide adventurers planet wide.

In *Action Story*, the Man Talk department catered to the westerners, folks who read the many Far West adventures penned by such western story yarnspinners as Walt Coburn and Johnston McCulley of ZORRO fame.

# The Puzzle Chest



*Conducted by Helen Asbury*





World Adventurers contribute regularly to this department, and suitable material is bought at our regular rates.



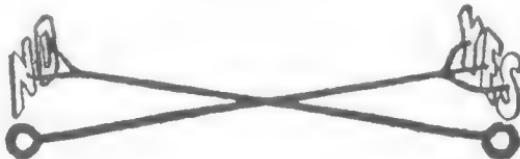
This is a regular department of World Adventurers. If you have information that you think your fellow members would like, spread yourself. This is your place.





## A CHAT WITH THE THE RANGE BOSS WRANGLERS CORNER

*Wild West Weekly*, that grand entry with the most cowboy characters of any magazine, depended on three reader departments, the two above and the one below, a guarantee of lively conversations via the mails.



## READERS' BRANDING IRONS

Readers' Branding Irons invited one and all to send in comments on the magazine and any other part of it, but insisted on letters of moderate length.

So here we have it, only a partial example of what the folks back over the years were accustomed to reading and what was considered to be of top interest. With no television and a stunted allowance of entertainment no wonder departments were so popular in contacts.

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## WINDY CHICAGO/HISTORIC CONVENTION

By J. Randolph Cox

The weather may have been unseasonably cold for April, but it soon warmed up as an historic conference for the Area for Dime Novels, Pulps, and Series Books began April 6 and continued through April 9. The setting was the Palmer House, Chicago, Illinois, as we entered our second decade as an Area of the American Culture Association at the annual joint meeting with the Popular Culture Association. The Palmer House is considerably older than our organization, but newly renovated. Even so, Nick Carter would have recognized the lobby of this, his favorite Chicago hotel.

As usual, I arrived a day early, but by Thursday most of the rest of our group was there. There were more sessions (seven, including our annual "roundup" discussion) and presenters (18) than ever before and everyone could not be fitted into the traditional Saturday schedule. The two day arrangement (Thursday and Saturday) allowed for more flexibility, relaxation, and a chance to talk books and collecting or to resume conversations about current projects begun in New Orleans.

Not all of these presentations were in the strictest tradition of our formats: dime novels, pulps, and series books. Some, like Bruce White's (Gallaudet University) on "Elbert Hubbard's Monthly *Little Journey* Biographical Pamphlets" gave us a different context for looking at paper covered publications in a series. Steven Moiles (Southern Illinois University) discussed modern series books in "Work is Hell: Women, Work, and Terror in Young-Adult 'Slasher' Novels" and provoked a lively discussion afterwards.

"Girls' Series: Motors, Movies, Martyrs, and Magic" was the title of the opening session on Thursday. Nancy Tillman Romalov led with "Mobile Heroines: Girls' Automobile, Outdoor, and Travel Series" in which the use of automobiles and travel in so many girls' series was thought to suggest the emergence of the protagonists as new women entering the modern era. "Women Professionals and Girl Movie Makers," by Area Chair Kathleen Chamberlain (Emory and Henry College) discussed the ways in which the writers of series books depicted the early motion picture industry. Tiffany Holmes drew parallels between classic fairy tales and the plots and situations in selected NANCY DREW stories in "Nancy Drew/Fairy Tale Connection." Diedre Johnson (West Chester University) contributed a comparison between two classic protagonists which demonstrated the truth of the title of her paper, "Nancy Drew: A Modern Elsie Dinsmore."

A second Thursday session covered not only Elbert Hubbard, but story papers and adaptations of stories about a favorite childhood hero into other media. Angie Farkas presented "Laura Jean Libbey and Mrs. Alex McVeigh Miller: Composing Women as Readers." Joel Cadbury discussed "Magic Lanterns and Marionettes: The evolution of Dramatic Adaptations of the Uncle Wiggily Series Books."

That afternoon we were treated to "Adventure and More Adventure" in two papers, "The Mystery of Mysticism in Early 20th-Century Adventure Stories" (H. Alan Pickrell, Emory and Henry College) which traced the use of the popular concept of mysticism in writers like Doyle and Haggard and in such diverse series as THE SHADOW (in pulps and on the radio), JACK ARMSTRONG (the series book character by Stanley Wallace), and Harold Sherman's TAHARA stories. James L. Evans (University of Texas—Pan American) continued his series on Beadle dime novels of Texas and the Southwest with "Gustave Aimard's Dime Novels Having Subtitles Mentioning the War for Texas."

"Debunking Myths about Dime Novels and Boy Scouts" was the title of the early session on Saturday. Jack Dizer's media presentation on "Boys' Life: The Real Beginnings," cleared up many erroneous ideas about the founding of that publication. Lydia Schurman dealt with the ways in which a writer can restate the speculations of one writer and present them as fact in "Richard Lingeman's Myth Making: Theodore Dreiser's Editing Jack Harkaway Stories." I followed with slides and readings from dime novels to address the question, "Chicago in the *Nick Carter Library*: Real City or Stage Set?"

"The Diversity of Popular Boys' Books" began with Bill Gowen's "Gilbert Patten: A Look Beyond the Merriwells" which graphically surveyed (yes, there were some excellent slides) the school and sports stories published by Patten under his own and various pseudonyms. David K. Vaughn (Air Force Institute of Technology) continued his series on aviation series with an unusual series set in Maine, "James Otis' Silver Fox Farm Series: Aviation Reaches the New England Coast." Henri Achee concluded with another installment in his examination of the works of Sam and Beryl Epstein, "A Penny for the Revolution: The Epsteins' Historical Adventure Series."

The final full session, "Affects and Effects: The Lessons of Juvenile Literature" was one paper short due to the absence of one presenter. John Springhall (University of Ulster, Northern Ireland) began with "The Dime Novel as Scapegoat for Juvenile Crime," an examination of Anthony Comstock's campaign to suppress vice by an attack on the Tousey Jesse James stories. The paper on young-adult "slasher" novels followed, and I concluded the session by reading Rocco Musemeche's "Seven Signatures Surface from 280 Broadway." Rocco, having been detained in warm Louisiana by the cold weather in Illinois, was unable to attend. His paper was a companion piece to a discussion of some popular writers of western pulp fiction for Street & Smith (Syracuse University Symposium, 1993) which I had read for him. Here his topic was seven popular authors for the Munsey pulp magazines, Edgar Rice Burroughs, Fred MacIsaac, George F. Worts, Frank L. Packard, Charles Alden Seltzer, Erle Stanley Gardner, and Theodore Roscoe. As many of us know, the last-named may be Rocco's favorite writer.

This conference was not just historic for being the eleventh in the series where we deal with dime novels, pulp magazines, and series books and recharge our intellectual batteries for another year with good books, good talk, good food, and good companionship. On behalf of the American Culture Association, the Area presented Eddie LeBlanc with an award for his many contributions to dime novel scholarship, not the least of which has been his 42 years as editor of the *Dime Novel Roundup*. The award was a handsomely framed copy of the first issue he edited (July, 1952) and a citation of some of his many achievements. Modest as always, Eddie said it was difficult to believe it had been that many years.

Following my presentation on NICK CARTER, the Area presented me with a similar award, a framed copy of the *Magnet Detective Library* edition cover of THE OLD DETECTIVE'S PUPIL. I can still remember when I was the youngest subscriber to the *Roundup*.

Our final "Roundup" session covered a number of topics concerning the future of these gatherings as well as a formal announcement (see p. 42) of editorship of the *Dime Novel Roundup*.

Next year: Philadelphia, April 12-15, 1995, at the Marriott Hotel. For further information, or to propose a topic for a presentation, write Kathleen Chamberlain, Emory and Henry College, Emory, VA 24327.

## THE LeBLANC BIBLIOGRAPHIC LISTINGS

By Edward T. LeBlanc

My dime novel bibliographic file consists of some 900 file folders each containing a listing of stories in a series, a photo or xerox of one or two covers and other pertinent information such as date, author and subject index. All information is not yet complete. There is always a bit of information that can be added. It is an everlasting job.

These bibliographic listings started in 1935 when I was 15 years old. My parents bought me a typewriter for Christmas that year and I immediately began typing up a listing of the stories in *Pluck and Luck*. It was a simple listing of the stories in numerical order with authors as given on the cover. The purpose was to have a list to identify stories on sale lists. Collectors in those days would send out sale lists with only numbers for identification. To determine the title it was necessary to find a list of titles in a publisher's catalog or from lists printed on the dime novels themselves. These were inadequate for it would take a large collection to locate the number you wanted the title of. It was my purpose to identify the story title with the number for all dime novel publications.

The lists were being continually updated. The date of issue was added. For some series this was easy enough but others such as *Wide Awake Library* which changed its publishing schedule from weekly to tri-weekly to semi-weekly and then back to weekly, it was next to impossible. These schedule changes were made without notice. It took years to determine the correct dates. I finally acquired a complete set from the Charles Austin collection and all the dates were dutifully entered. This is true with many of the black and white dime novel series. They often issued special numbers without changing the sequence but it sure played havoc with dates. A special number was often published as an additional issue during a week. This made determining the correct date from a numerical listing impossible.

Listing of stories in the story papers proved to be the most difficult. There were no published listings and it was necessary to check each and every number. This meant visits to the Library of Congress and other libraries holding complete sets or near complete sets. It was surprising to find that the Library of Congress did not have complete sets of everything as I believed. I was able to complete most of the highly popular story papers. *New York Weekly* from the files held at Syracuse University, *Fireside Companion* and *New York Ledger* from files held at Brandeis University. *Saturday Night* was completed from the complete file collected by Denis Rogers, now at the University of Minnesota. Most of the Tousey story papers from files compiled by Wm. J. Benners and so on with all the dime novel series. There are still a few series not complete for which I'm looking for libraries that have files.

Although my father and I collected mainly dime novels, in our ramblings through old bookstores throughout New England we started picking up the paperback series of the late 19th century. Series like George Munro's *Seaside Library*, Norman Munro's *Munro's Library*, *Lovell's Library* and countless others. These series became the subject of my bibliographic listings. As the collection expanded it was found that there were many more of these series published than even dime novels. In making listings of all these necessitated buying a second file cabinet.

British penny dreadfuls were added to the listings and although these are often only handwritten they do contain a physical description of the series and a listing of stories to the extent that I have been able

to determine. These take up a file drawer with about 300 series.

The dime novel listings were and are the ones that I have spent more time in determining all pertinent information. When Johannsen's book on Beadle publications was published, I patterned the listings after his listings. This meant attempting to determine the true author, an almost impossible task. There were some collectors and readers who felt they could determine the true author by the style, a very haphazard and non-professional method. However Street & Smith donated their files to Syracuse University. These files included ledgers of most of the Street & Smith series with the true author noted. I'm presently in the process of updating my Street & Smith files to include this information. The ledger files were xeroxed by Lydia Schurman who gave them to me. This saved me the time of doing the work myself. I believe Randy Cox also made copies.

Another feature of the Johannsen Beadle listings was the reprinting information. This sent me to preparing card files of the stories to determine reprintings. This cleared up a lot of the reprinting information but often the author and title was changed and I'm sure that some reprintings were missed. Again the Street & Smith files at Syracuse came to the rescue for this information for their publications. However the Frank Tousey publications it is almost impossible to determine the true author. Though there is some material extant on some of the authors. Francis W. Doughty kept a file of his works. Some of these files were obtained by a collector. Upon his death, by a quirk of fate I was able to buy a good portion of the collection. The rest went to the University of Rochester. Also a sister of Mr. Doughty came upon his notes and lists which she sold to Robert Smeltzer. These came into the possession of Mr. E. M. (Mike) Saavedra who made the information available to me and is included in my listings.

The listings will never be complete. Information keeps popping up. Victor Berch an avid collector of detective and mystery stories enjoys following up leads. One led him to a cache of Ernest A. Young materials, letters, notes, etc. He was an author for Street & Smith and possibly other dime novel publishers. There is still some material out there, but its getting less and less. Much of it gets thrown out as of no consequences by a grandson/daughter and great-grandchildren.

To a collector/researcher there's always a silver lining where more information will be uncovered. Hopefully it will be someone who understands its importance.

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## GRADING BOYS BOOKS

- MINT As issued by the publisher. Bright and clean throughout.
- FINE Bright and clean throughout. Flyleaf may contain gift inscription.
- VERY GOOD Bright and clean throughout, but may have minor spotting or soiling; minor wear may show at top and bottom of spine. Flyleaf may contain some writing.
- GOOD Often advertised as average copies. Spine and cover may be a little faded; top and bottom of spine may show some wear. Should be in reasonably sound condition, though hinge may be broken. Appearance is not marred.
- FAIR Less than sound. Book may be "warped," hinges broken, some signatures loose. Spine and cover may be faded to the point where lettering is difficult to make out. May be soiled, inside pages may have tears, but still complete and in collectible condition.
- POOR Often advertised as "Reading Copies." Badly shaken, signatures loose, flyleaf pages may be missing. Title page may be missing. Covers may be loose or detached, but all text is present.

## DUST JACKETS

- DJEF Clean dust jacket, no tears, no signs of water.
- DJF May show signs of wear, but no tears other than at folded edges.
- DJT Dust jacket torn, but repairable. May be yellowed but not brittle.
- DJF Dust jacket ragged, but complete and repairable.
- DJP Parts missing, but better than none at all.
- DJM Dust jacket missing.

In using these definitions, any defects not noted should be described in detail. Often a book may be fine except for one defect which may not affect its collectibility. This should be noted in sale listings.

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When typing material for submission to Dime Novel Round-Up, please adopt the following standards of orthography:

Limit the width of your typing to 72 characters per line. For pica type (10 characters per inch), set your left margin at 8, and the right one at 80. For elite type (12 characters per inch), set your left margin at 20, and the right at 92.

Leave 3/4 inches of space at the top, and 1 inch at the bottom of your page. In the otherwise blank space at the top, please number your pages on the right side.

Double-space your lines. This also applies to extensive quotations from published and unpublished sources within your article.

Indent your paragraphs six spaces.

Use a single space after punctuation marks within a sentence, and two spaces after the final punctuation of a sentence.

For the figure "one" use 1, not I.

Type the titles of books and names of series in CAPITAL LETTERS.

Underline the names of newspapers and magazines. In most cases it is obvious from the content, but occasionally it is a puzzle involving material that is unfamiliar to all but the author of the article, and who is better able to advise the typesetter than one who knows his stuff?

Put your telephone number, including area code, on the final page of your article. Should there be any questions concerning your material, this will permit them to be settled with a minimum amount of delay. The phone number should be where you can be reached on evenings or weekends.

Proofread your article aloud to yourself or someone else. Do this at least twice. It is surprising what one can find to correct by this.

By following these suggestions every two pages of typed material will result in one page in the finished magazine.